WTCI-595-P

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July 26, 1979

Edwin C. Holstein, M.D.
Mt. Sinai School of Medicine
Mt. Sinai Hospital
New York, New York

Dear Dr. Holstein:

A Port Authority employee attended your lecture "Biological Effects of Dusts" on May 11, 1979 at the Environmental Health Symposium held at Queensborough Community College, Bayside, New York. In your presentation, a slide was shown of a floor in the World Trade Center as an illustration of the utilization of asbestos for fireproofing. Perhaps some in your audience may have construed your remarks to mean that all the World Trade Center steel beams are so protected. I wish to assure you that only one zone, the equivalent of twenty floors in one of the towers, is protected with an asbestos fireproofing compound.

When construction of the World Trade Center towers was in its early stages, asbestos was commonly used as a fireproofing material on steel beams. Potential problems relating to the use of asbestos were just becoming known at that time. As a result, Port Authority engineers, working with the staff of the New York City Department of Air Resources and scientists at Mount Sinai Hospital, concluded that the use of non-asbestos fireproofing material would be consistent with safeguarding public health.

In early 1970, therefore, the Port Authority switched to a non-asbestos fireproofer. The small amount of asbestos fireproofing material already in place in the steelwork of One World Trade Center -- representing only 5% of all the Center's steelwork -- was completely and safely covered and sealed off by non-asbestos fireproofing materials at considerable extra cost to the Authority.

Since that time, industrial hygienists from the Port Authority's Risk Management Division have scheduled a continuous program of monitoring airborne particles at the World Trade Center to assure the health and safety of its occupants. In their most recent samplings for airborne asbestos fiber concentrations, our hygienists found that all current regulatory limitations were being satisfied.

PLAINTIFF'S EXHIBIT
PX-642

It would be appreciated if your resource data would reflect the facts in this matter.

Your concern for health and safety is appreciated, and is consistent with our own. Health hazards from contaminants must be eliminated and Trade Center occupants must be protected from fire hazard. You may be reassured of our agency's commitment to ensure that such is the case at the Trade Center.

Sincerely,

James M. Kennelly
Deputy Director
Public Affairs Department

JMK/ATL:ck

bcc: Messrs. N.A. Rudelfi, S.J. Frigand, R.J. Linn, M. Malone, Dr. Schuman, C. Vasquez, R.J. Winters; Miss Langford